[Mr. T. J. Matthew.]

(ii) the percentage of the total area of the State that has already been constituted as reserved forests;

(iii) whether the Dewan has not stated in his address to the fourteenth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly that there is little scope for further forest reservation in Travancore; and

(iv) if so, what has induced them to deviate from that policy?

MR. N. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government on other duty*):

(i) In the twelfth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, a representation was made by Mr. Aiyappan Pillai, Member for Chengannur taluk, against further extension of reservation.

(ii) About 31 per cent.

(iii) Yes. In the fourteenth session of the Assembly the Dewan stated that there was no further scope for reservation.

(iv) Government have not deviated from that policy except in the case of a few blocks where reservation had then been decided upon.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): With regard to answer to part (iv) of the question, will the Government be pleased to state how many new blocks have been reserved after the date referred to?

MR. N. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government on other duty*): It does not arise out of the answer furnished; and so I claim notice.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): The answer says that a few blocks were reserved.

MR. N. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government on other duty*): The blocks reserved are dealt with in the Annual Report of each year.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): So, Government are not in a position to say how many are reserved.

MR. N. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government on other duty*): Government are in a position to say how many have been reserved. But I have not collected and tabulated the information.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): Do Government consider that the policy enunciated at the fourteenth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly may be maintained?

MR. N. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Secretary to Government on other duty*): Yes, and it can be seen from the answer to part (iv).

Cheruvalli-Vellanadi Road.

100. **MR. T. J. MATTHEW** (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether they are cutting open a road from Kanjirapalli (26th mile Kottayam-Kumili Road), to Erumeli?

(*b*) What is the distance from the terminus of the above road at Erumeli to—

(1) the Vellanadi Estate and

(2) the Cheruvalli Estate?

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(*c*) Is the Vellanadi Estate connected by road with the Kottayam-Kumili Road at Mundakayam and the Cheruvalli Estate with the Manimala-Ranni Road?

(*d*) Will the Government be pleased to state—

(i) whether the Vellanadi and Cheruvalli Estates cannot be connected with the Kanjirapalli-Erumeli road referred to in part (*a*);

(ii) whether representations have not been made by Mr. J. R. Vincent and other members of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly regarding the advisability and necessity of connecting the Vellanadi Estate with the Cheruvalli Estate by a road; and

(iii) the approximate cost of cutting open a road to effect the above connection?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (1) About three miles along the line of road traced.

(2) The same as above.

(*c*) Yes; both are so connected.

(*d*) (i) Both could be so connected.

(ii) Yes.

(iii) The cost of connecting the two estates by opening a road was estimated in 1919 at Rs. 40,000, including Rs. 1,000 for land compensation in Erumeli Pettai. It may now be about Rs. 50,000. But the alignment traced was very bad both in profile and plan, owing to the configuration of the tract as it had to rise and fall and take a tortuous course to cross the three big tributaries of the Manimala river and at such crossings, the road, if made, would be liable to submersion owing to the backing from the Manimala river. This connection has therefore been abandoned as not really necessary and the road from Kanjirapalli to Erumeli was taken up instead, to serve the purpose intended to be served by the former.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): With regard to answer to part (*c*), do Government think that the road which is now being cut will serve the purpose of the road proposed to connect the Cheruvalli Estate?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Yes. It was understood on investigation that the road originally proposed to connect the two Estates was impracticable for several reasons and that the object in view was really to have a connection with the Kanjirapalli-Erumeli Road. It is, therefore, that Government have estimated for that work.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): That is contained in the answer already given. My question was, "Do Government think that the purpose proposed to be served by connecting the two Estates will be served by this new road?"

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): I have already answered that, after investigation, as a result of the representation in the fifteenth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, it was

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[Mr. T. P. Ramasubba Aiyar.]

found that the proposed road connecting the two Estates was impracticable owing to the configuration of the country. The object was since ascertained to be only the connection between Kanjirapalli and Erumeli side and an estimate for a road connecting Kanjirapalli with Erumeli amounting to Rs. 11,000 was forwarded to Government. If further facts prove that this connection is not enough, the matter will have to be considered again.

Maintenance of Roads by the P. W. Department.

101. **MR. T. J. MATTHEW** (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): (*a*) Will the Government be pleased to state whether there is any departmental circular directing Division and Sub-Division Officers or their subordinates not to entrust the work of maintenance of roads to contractors but to have such works carried out by the department direct?

(*b*) If so, does the circular extend the direction to the case of ryots' roads also?

(*c*) If there is such a circular, will the Government be pleased to state the reason why it was issued?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) The answer is in the affirmative.

(*b*) Yes. When the ryots' roads are taken over for departmental maintenance, they become subject to the circular.

(*c*) The circular was issued in the interests of Government. According to it, the supply of materials is given out on contract; but the actual work is done by the department. The maintenance of a road does not mean its repair throughout its entire length. It is only patch work here and there as occasion requires. In the nature of the work it is best done by the department.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): Was the circular in question issued with the sanction of Government?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): The circular was issued by the Chief Engineer, being a departmental circular. I am not now in a position to say if it was issued with the sanction of Government. Probably it was not.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): Does the circular definitely say that no work should be entrusted to contractors?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): The circular says what works shall be given to contractors and what shall be done by the Public Works Department and the material portions have been extracted and given in the answer.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): Does it say that contracts for the maintenance of roads should not be given to contractors at all?

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